



Communicator

December 2013

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QRM

News You Can Lose

and Much More!



The December 2013 Newsletter of the Surrey Amateur Radio Club
Next General Meeting January 8th



The Communicator



**SURREY
AMATEUR RADIO CLUB**

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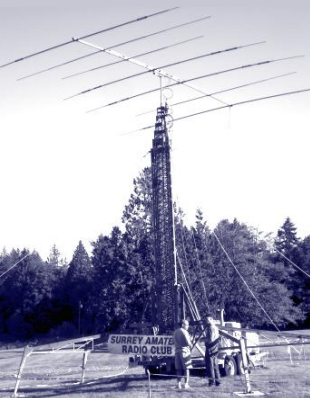
Nelson Eisel VE7NAE

VIA THE WEB

www.ve7sar.net

The SARC Communicator is published monthly for members of the Surrey Amateur Radio Club.

SARC maintains a website at www.ve7sar.net that includes club history, meetings, news and other information.



November Monthly Meeting Minutes

November 13, 2013

The meeting was called to order by President, John Brodie VA7XB, at 1900 hrs. There were 32 attendees, including 3 visitors.

Introduction

Visitors were welcomed: Sean Magnusson VE7PBQ, Sheldon Ward VA7XNL, Scott Boles from the USA.

The Executive is looking for nominations for "Amateur(s) of the Year" awards, to be presented at the Christmas party.

A request was made for volunteers to help with transportation to meetings for Garvin VA7YEE.

The after-meeting social at McDonalds Fraser Hwy and 156th St. will continue

Raffle tickets for the donated Sony Sound Bar can be purchased from Scott.

Financial

Scott VE7HA reported a healthy

balance in both chequing and savings accounts.

Name badges are on order.

SEPAR

No report available.

Repeater

George VE7QH reported that the repeaters are currently functioning well

The repeater working group is looking at the feasibility of an enclosure of the repeaters to isolate them from the atmosphere in the boiler room.

Operator Training

Brett VE7GM reported that ARRL Sweepstakes contest is on this coming weekend and the CQ WW DX (CW) contest will take place the following weekend.

VE7SAR QSL cards have now been printed for use in contests and Nelson VE7NAE offered to be club QSL manager.

CLUB EXECUTIVE 2013-2014

PRESIDENT

John Brodie VA7XB

VICE PRESIDENT

Brett Garrett VE7GM

SECRETARY

Rob Gilchrist VE7CZV
(also Net Manager)

TREASURER

Scott Hawrelak VE7HA

DIRECTORS

John Schouten VE7TI
(Communicator Editor)

George Merchant
VE7QH (Repeaters)

Bill Little VA7ZBL
(Membership)

Bill Gipps VE7XS

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Field Day Results

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Scott Hawrelak VE7HA

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December SARC Calendar

	SEPARS Net	SARC Net
1 st Tuesday	Drew VA7DRW Jay VE7OFH Standby	Drew VA7DRW
2 nd Tuesday	Dixie VA7DIX Alan VA7BIT Standby	Jinty VA7JMR
3 rd Tuesday	Rob VE7CZV	Anton VE7SSD
4 th Tuesday	Peter VE7PGX Dixie VA7DIX Standby	John VA7XB
5 th Tuesday	Jinty VA7JMR	Elizabeth VE7ELA
Want a turn at Net Control? Contact the SARC Net Manager VE7CZV @ separs.net		

SARC hosts an Amateur Radio net each Tuesday evening at 8 PM. Please tune in to the VE7RSC repeater at 147.360 MHz (+600 KHz) Tone=110.9, also accessible on IRLP node 1736 and Echolink node 496228. On UHF we operate a repeater on 443.775MHz (+5Mhz) Tone=110.9 and EchoLink Node 1737

Equipment

Rick VE7GMO advised that the trailers/towers have been moved and the shelter has been erected at the new storage location. Wiring of the big trailer is under repair by Rick.

Additional beams and tower have been acquired - decision to be made by Exec about disposal of surplus items.

Communicator

No issues, except John VE7TI always welcomes more contribution of technical and personal articles.

Membership

Bill VA7ZBL reported that we currently have 61 members in good standing and there is an expectation that the stragglers will pay up over the next few months.

Website

Hiu VE7YXG reported no issues.

Net Control

Net manager, Rob VE7CZV, advised that the nets have been going well. Rob will be away from the nets for 2 months due to a choir commitment and anyone willing to

assist with any of the nets should advise Rob. Brett VE7GM will stand in for Rob on Rob's scheduled night.

New Business

It was suggested we endeavor to improve the signage and lighting to direct members and visitors to the meeting room.

Presentation

John White VA7JW gave a stimulating presentation on the effects of lightning and methods of lightning suppression including proper grounding. John VA7XB thanked John for his excellent talk and presented him with bottle of wine.

Christmas Party

Jinty reiterated the information about the Christmas party, emphasizing the need for members to help with obtaining door prizes and to commit to attendance within the next week.

The meeting was adjourned at 2100.

~ Rob VE7CZV
Secretary

DOWN THE LOG...

SARC Monthly Meetings

2nd Wednesday (Sept-Jun)
1900 hrs local at the Emergency
Management BC PREOC,
14275 96th Avenue, Surrey, BC

Weekly Club Breakfast

Friday at 0800 local
ABC Country Restaurant at
600 - 7380 King George Blvd.
Surrey

SARC Net

Tuesday at 2000 hrs local
on 147.360 MHz (+) Tone=110.9

SEPARS Net

Tuesday at 19:30 hrs local
on 147.360 MHz (+) Tone=110.9

Announcements & News

SEPARS Monthly Workshop
Third Thursday, 1900-2130 local
14923-64th Ave, next to Firehall
#9, Surrey.

SEPARS Training

Fourth Saturday, 0830 local,
Firehall #1, 88 & 132nd Street,
Surrey

On the Web

ve7sar.net

Between newsletters, watch your e-mail for announcements of events, monthly meetings and training opportunities. These announcements can also be found on our web page, or via:

Twitter
[@ve7sar](https://twitter.com/ve7sar)

Photos
Web Albums

SARC Christmas Party

Where: Eaglequest Coyote Creek Golf Club,
7778 - 152nd Street, Surrey

When: December 7, 2013 from 11 am until 2 pm

Cost: SARC members and guests: \$30 per person
SEPAR members and guests: \$40 per person.

SARC & SEPAR members and guests are cordially invited to attend.

Come and join us for Caesar salad, Christmas turkey and all the trimmings with Baked Eggnog Cheese Cake & Berry Coulis for Dessert. Vegetarian option available.

Awards and door prizes (including a radio) will be part of the event, as well as entertainment.

RSVP to jinty.reid@gmail.com





Time to Feel Good (Before Buckling Down Again)



By now, many of you will know that VE7SAR, the Field Day station operated this year by SARC and SEPARS, placed #1 in the 3A category in Canada.

The summer edition of the Communicator went into considerable detail about our Field Day efforts, but only last week did we discover that we had achieved the goal we had set for ourselves.

Our score—just in case it has slipped your mind for the present—was 7262 with 1689 QSOs, which was enough not only to win our 3A category in Canada, but (according to analysis done by Jim VE7FO, from who's hard work I will, herein, freely poach) was sufficient to place us in the top 5% of all categories in North America. No small achievement, this.

There were 22 Canadian stations participating in the 3A category. As we expected, our competition was fierce from VE3HB, who earned #1 place last year with a score of 6442 and 1540 QSOs. Both VE3HB and VE7SAR bested that performance this year, but fortunately for us we “bested” it better than they—by a smidgeon (1%).

The top Canadian rankings were:

Rank	Call	Score	QSOs
#1	VE7SAR	7,262	1,689
#2	VE3HB	7,160	1,749
#3	VE2CVR	3,594	882
#4	VE7SCC	3,246	847
#5	VE3RL	3,036	808

Note that VE3HB beat us in the number of QSOs, but we beat them in the score. This shows how important bonus points are, and emphasizes what we were telling “the troops” earlier this year. Losing just a few bonus points can cost a team the win.

No doubt you are wondering how we did overall in Canada. After all, not everyone was operating 3A. There were Canadian entries in categories from 1A to 12A, with 2Ds, 3As, 4Fs, and a lot of other categories sprinkled in between.

Looking at the top nine stations out of the 151 Canadian stations participating:

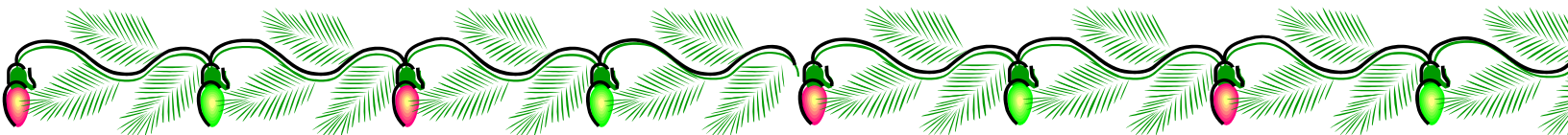
Rank	Call	Cat	Score	QSOs
#1	VE3XR	4A	8,334	2,406
#2	VE3QDR	5AB	7,845	759
#3	VE3MIS	12A	7,496	1,882
#4	VE1FO	2F	7,396	1,873
#5	VE3VM	8A	7,394	2,359
#6	VE7SAR	3A	7,262	1,689
#7	VE3HB	3A	7,262	1,689
#8	VA3DF	1B2B	5,530	499
#9	VE3LC	2E	4,875	516

That's us at #6. Being #6 out of 151 isn't at all bad—that's in the top 4%. And we're located off in the northwest corner of the competition area, whereas all but one of the other stations are in VE3-land, just north of the middle of “the action”.

By now the real skeptics are thinking that considering only rankings in Canada is pretty lame considering that “the real competition is to our south”.

Considering all North American entries in Category 3A (all 310 of them), we look at the “top 20” (omitting all the detail between #1 and us):

Rank	Call	Score	QSOs
#1	W2RDX	13,438	3,530
.			
.			
#19	VE7SAR	7,262	1,689
#20	VE3HB	7,160	1,749



There we are at #19. Again, coming #19 out of 310 is highly respectable, being in the top 6% of all 3A entries.

So how did we do considering **all entries**, in **all categories**? Clearly, this is the toughest test.

There were a total of 2548 participating stations, many of them located in advantageous geographical locations. Again omitting all detail between #1 and us:

Rank	Call	Cat	Score	QSOs
#1	W3AO	29A	33,724	10,275
.				
.				
.				
#115	VE7SAR	3A	7,262	1,689

Now we're down to #115, which perhaps doesn't look so exciting until one considers that #115 out of 2548 entries still puts us in the top 5% of **all** entries in the entire event.

In Jim's words: "An excellent result. Congratulations all round."

Indeed, congratulations to our entire joint team. This was truly a collective achievement. Many people contributed, some over the long term, and some very much "in the moment".

We also had great support from our Corporate Sponsors and Supporters:

- SuperSave Group (who donated the use of portable toilets);
- Salvation Army (who provided the mobile kitchen);
- Vancouver Axle & Frame (who undertook extensive modifications to the yellow tower/trailer);
- Surrey Fire Services (who secured the site for us at no charge, and provided chairs and tables); and
- ICOM Canada (who made available three top quality radios for our event).

We needed every sponsor, supporter and volunteer we had. And we will again in 2014. And the earlier we get the volunteers working, the better. We especially need some "young blood" who will be able to take over once the current set of retirees **really** retire.

Why is it so important we get committed volunteers months ahead of the 2014 event? Well, considering that Jim did most of the analysis behind this article, it's only fair to give him the last words:

"A 20% improvement in our score would have put us at #13 in North America [in 3A]. I believe that we could accomplish this in 2014."

~ Brett VE7GM

Supplementary note from John VA7XB: Not mentioned above in his supreme modesty is our FD leader, Brett VE7GM, who more than anyone else, is responsible for our success. Brett no doubt lost many hours of sleep while ensuring that every detail was attended to, smoothing over the many rough spots, figuring out ways around the obstacles, and assembling the winning team.

This level of planning is unprecedented in all previous FD efforts in which I have been involved (since about 2000). Although those identified above and many others played critical roles, it could not have been done without Brett's keen interest, determination and management skills

For Sale

Kenwood D-710A mobile, brand new in box, never used
\$500.00Contact

John Horahan VA7DFA

Call 604-318-4704

Or email: johnhorahan@gmail.com

Wanted

Rob VE7CZV still needs an auto-tuner for his HF rig, specifically for 80m.

If you have or know of one that is available at a good price, please contact Rob via
robgil@telus.net



The Contest Contender

Fred Orsetti VE7IO

The CQ WW DX Contest

Well the CQWWDX CW contest, as they say, is history but there were highlights. The contest was operated from Fred's QTH using the call VE7IO and the summary sheet is below.

Highlights included working South Africa, D4C, Cape Verde on 80 meters for a nice double multiplier. Working 3DAOET Swaziland, Viet Nam and many other countries. The above chart also shows we worked DXCC on both 20 and 15 meters plus many countries on the other bands. The bands were in very good shape with lots of DX to work. Certainly during the CQ WW DX contests you will find lots of stations not normally heard.

Well that's the highlights for the bands, but this was a training session albeit for the more seasoned CW operators. Operator highlights included Brett VE7GM spending a lengthy time in the "run" mode with very good results. Brett achieve rate for a good period of time which put a big smile on his face - well done Brett. John, VA7XB, also spent 4 hours in the chair with time in the "run" mode also achieving rate - great work John.

We had Stan, VA7NF, with us for the first time and Stan focussed on working multipliers and what a great job he did. Stan was the op who worked D4C on 80 meters sometime around midnight. Stan's concentration on the mults most certainly contributed to our score. Jay, VE7KC, also worked mults on 40 meters and as can be seen by the number of countries worked on 40 he was successful.

These charts show the good run times and the significant increase in multipliers (chart 2) worked this year over last year's contest. The red lines are our score this year and the black line last year's score.

Chart1 Points (score)

Band	QSOs	Pts	ZN	Cty
3.5	170	348	9	14
7	232	517	29	51
14	540	1338	30	100
21	597	1510	32	109
28	282	653	28	53
Total	1821	4366	128	327

Score : 1,986,530

Operating Time: 29.5 hours

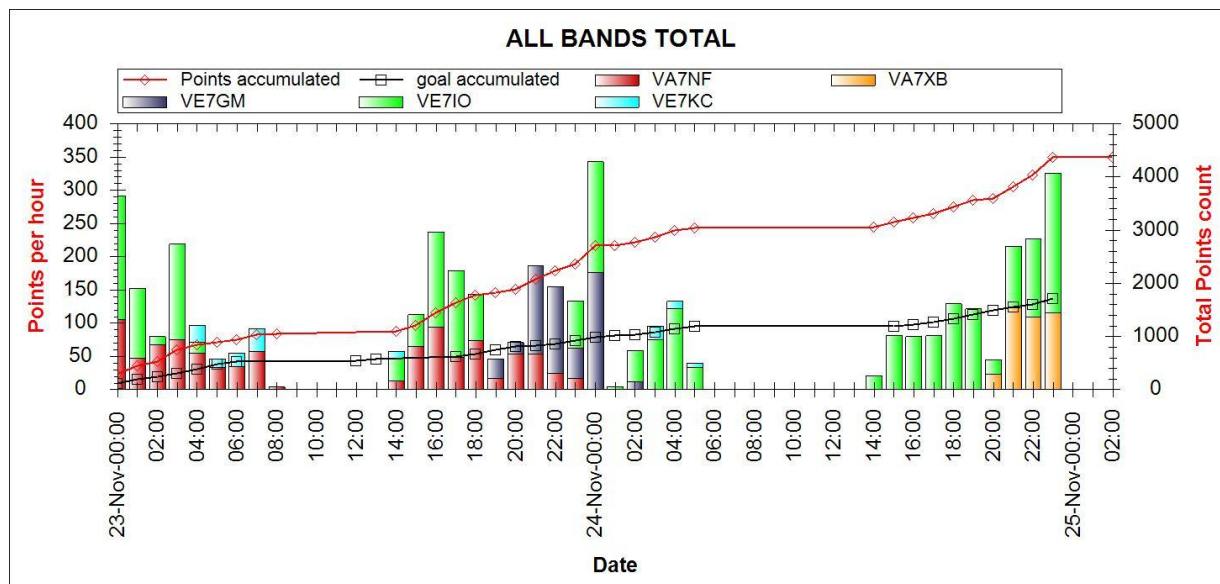
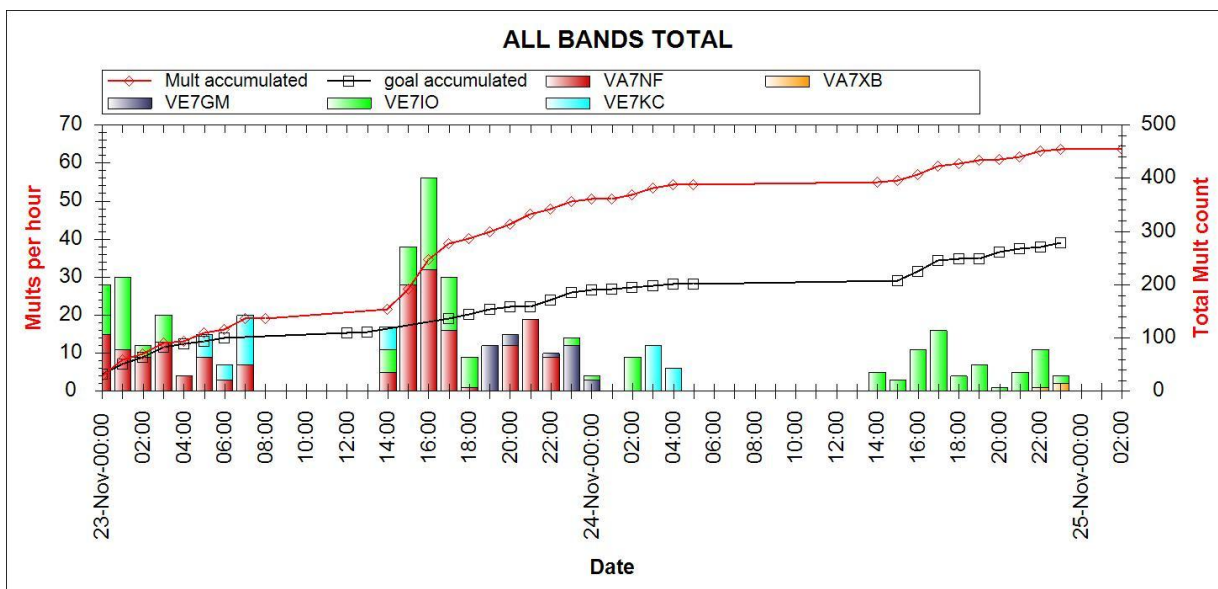


Chart 2 Multipliers



For me personally it was a great weekend and I enjoyed working with all the operators who ran VE7IO with a great deal of professionalism. There is no doubt that our operators have passed a milestone in working CW contests with their achievement of operating in the "run" mode.

I believe the next contest from VE7IO will be the RAC Winter contest which is both SSB and CW. We have the use of VE7RAC for the contest which will make us more popular on the bands. I am looking forward to another fun time.

SARC Contest Calendar for 2013/2014

Dates	Contest	Modes
Dec 28	RAC Winter Contest	SSB & CW
Jan 4-5	ARRL Roundup	RTTY
Jan 18-19	North American QSO Party	SSB
Feb 1-2	BC QSO Party	SSB, RTTY & CW
Feb 8-9	CQ WW WPX Contest	RTTY
Feb 22-23	North American QSO Party	RTTY
Mar 29-30	CQ WW WPX Contest	SSB
May 24-25	CQ WW WPX Contest	CW
June 28-29	ARRL Field Day	



The Contest Contender

John Brodie VA7XB

ARRL Sweepstakes SSB Contest

On Saturday Nov 16th and Sunday Nov 17th, a few members of SARC's operator training group got together at the station of VA7XB to hone their SSB skills in the ARRL Sweepstakes.

This was the second contest of the new season where we have used the club callsign of VE7SAR rather than that of the host station.

The SS is a challenging contest because the operators must correctly send and receive a complicated exchange simulating a traffic message, consisting of:

- a serial number which advances one with each confirmed contact
- a "precedence" which reflects the class of station (in our case "M" meaning "multi operators")
- the station call sign (VE7SAR)
- a "check" which is the year the station licence was obtained (in this case "60")
- the ARRL section abbreviation (for us "BC")

Mentoring of trainees was performed by Jim VE7FO on Saturday and Brett VE7GM on Sunday. As Jim has

encouraged the ops to strive for the most efficient method of operating, all participants pre-recorded voice macros to facilitate the passing of repetitive information with a keystroke rather than verbally. This can be done using "Audacity" or other audio recording software to get the level, balance, length of pauses and cadence just right. Jim has showed us how to store the wav files and have N1MM, the logging software, bring up these macros when the correct function key is pressed. This technique takes some practice as obviously the serial number cannot be pre-programmed and the use of macros has to be timed exactly right. All trainees were able to master the technique within a few hours of coaching and repetition.

Total number of contacts was modest - about 150 for the 2 days, but sufficient to give all operators confidence to move up to the next contest challenge.

Related note: Since we are now participating as VE7SAR, the QSLs are starting to roll in. Nelson VE7NAE has graciously volunteered to be our new QSL manager. Have a look at SARC's card, with thanks to John VE7TI for preparing the graphics, and Fred VE7IO for the printing.



Photo 1 Anton VE7SSD proudly pointing out his rate of around 60 contacts per hour for a sustained period while "running"



Photo 2 Stan VA7NF operating with Jim VE7FO coaching on the side



Photo 3 Kapila VE7KGK operating and Jim VE7FO coaching on the side

Photo 4 a picture of the new QSL card





SEPAR Report

Fred Orsetti VE7IO

November 2013 Report



This month has been devoted to preparing for the upcoming Simulated Emergency Test (SET) on November 30th. The SET which is organized under RAC Field Services ARES by the BC/Yukon ARES emergency coordinator Fred VE7IO encompasses the Province of BC as well as the Yukon. The exercise is open to all emergency groups or teams within BC and the Yukon.

Stations will format 2 NTS messages (ADDRESSED TO THEMSELVES), WITH FULL ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBER. The messages will then be routed through the participating stations and end up back with the originator. The entire exercise will be under the direction of the SET net control station.

In addition to formatting messages and placing them out onto the "circuit" each station will be responsible for coordinating the reception of messages coming from the station before them.

SEPARS will activate the Radio Room at the EOC as well as the communications trailer which will be located at the site of the new Surrey City Hall in Central City. The communications between the Radio Room and the Communications trailer will be via BCWARN. Voice traffic will be on UHF or D-Star to avoid interfering with SET net control on 147.360+ (VE7RSC).

In preparation for the exercise SEPARS has held two special refresher training sessions on Tuesday evenings for NTS message handling. As it is expected that the SET exercise messages may be NTS numbered messages the training has focused NTS numbered message usage.

In addition to the SET exercise Peter, VE7PGX, has started training sessions for the upcoming ESS exercise in the spring of 2014. He has laid out a very comprehensive training plan in order to ensure that SEPARS provides the highest level of emergency communications during the ESS exercise. There will be more on this as we get closer to the exercise date.

On January 11th a planned exercise with hospitals in BC and south of the border will involve Surrey Memorial and Peace Arch District Hospitals. SEPARS role in this exercise will be to provide technical support and operators for both hospitals. As the type of messages expected to be passed are of a medical nature the use of digital communications is planned. Fraser Health has 22 grab and go kits 11 are equipped with TNC's which will allow for the use of digital messaging. SEPARS will be providing operators for both hospitals.

The SEPARS promotional video is moving along as Mayor Dianne Watts has completed a short part supporting SEPARS and our emergency communications team. There is one segment left to do and that will be completed on December 1, 2013. Once all the video is shot then the task of cutting, adding sound and producing a final promotional product.

In addition to all of the above SEPARS members have been attending special training sessions for both the SET and ESS exercises.

~ Fred VE7IO

SEPAR Meetings

Third Thursday of each month starting at 1900 hrs

Fourth Saturday of each month starting at 0900 hrs

Location and event schedule can be found at
separ.shutterfly.com – click on the calendar tab



Radio-Active

Jinty Reid VA7JMR

Introducing Scott Hawrelak VE7HA

Scott was born in Regina but raised in Nunavut in the Arctic. His father was a Ham as well as a radio operator for the Department of Transportation, controlling air traffic. His mother was a school teacher much loved by her students. Scott has 2 sisters who live now in the interior of B.C. Because of the nature of his father's work, the family moved around frequently. Consequently, Scott lived in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Northwest Territories and B.C. In school, Scott excelled in geography and had a mind that absorbed facts and figures which continues to this day. His first job after leaving school was working for the Bank of America doing foreign exchange at Vancouver Airport. His second job was as assistant manager for Scottsdale Bowling where he has remained for the past 22 years.

As far as hobbies go, Scott enjoys bowling and has attended 12 National Championships as a player and a coach. He has been a stamp collector for many years and remembers getting hold of his father's QSO Cards and



cutting the stamps off them, you naughty boy! Ten years ago Scott followed his father's interest in Ham radio and obtained his Basic License with Honours. He joined SARC around the same time and for the past 4 years has served as Treasurer. He

has an ICOM V8 hand held radio and has always used 2 meter VHF/UHF. He does have an HF Base Radio all connected up but is not yet fully confident in using it. He is interested in going digital and hopes this will provide the impetus to get going in HF.



Scott loves to travel and has been to Fiji, Holland, Portugal, Spain, Morocco, England, Scotland, Iceland and hopes in the future to travel to Turkey and China. He has lived in Australia for a year, working in a community centre library. Scott is a member of SEPAR and would like to be active in the organization but lacks the time to do so. Scott enjoys going to Las Vegas when he can and though he visits the casinos he is very disciplined in gambling, keeping within a strict budget. Scott is hoping to retire within the next 5 to 10 years.

John Brodie describes Scott as; being very calm and collected when doing multiple tasks (such as collecting money for several things at the same time), always cheerful, friendly and out-going, and can be counted on to step up when volunteers are needed, contributes well to the business affairs of the club and can be depended on to give thoughtful advice on sensitive issues. He is careful with club money and keeps good records so that he can always account for the income and expenditures. If you still don't know who Scott is, look for the man with the cash box and receipt book at SARC meetings!

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\$500.00Contact

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Or email: johnhorahan@gmail.com

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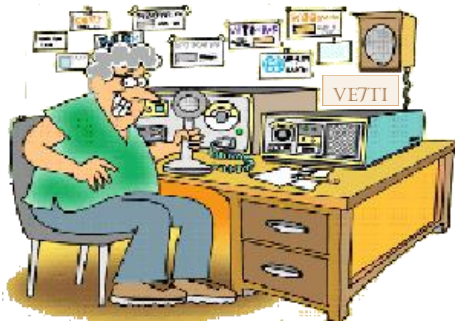
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If you have or know of one that is available at a good price, please contact Rob via
robgil@telus.net

The SARC Calendar ...places to be in Surrey for Amateur Radio in the month ahead

December 2013						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 	2	3 For details on all SARC events, go to ve7sar.net For details on all SEPARS events, go to separ.shutterfly.com/calendar	4	5	6 Weekly SARC Breakfast 8:00 ABC Restaurant 74th & King George Blvd.	7 SARC Xmas Party 11-14:30
8	9	10 SEPAR NET 7:30 SARC NET 8:00	11	12	13 Weekly SARC Breakfast 8:00	14
15	16	17 SEPAR NET 7:30 SARC NET 8:00	18 SARC Exec Meeting	19	20 Weekly SARC Breakfast 8:00	21
22	23	24 SEPAR NET 7:30 SARC NET 8:00	25 	26	27 Weekly SARC Breakfast 8:00	28 Contest: RAC WINTER CONTEST (SSB & CW)
29	30	31 SEPAR NET 7:30 SARC NET 8:00	1	2	3 Weekly SARC Breakfast 8:00	4

Contest Details: <http://hornucopia.com/contestcal/contestcal.html>



QRM

...from the Editor's shack

*Do you have a photo or bit of club news to share?
Something to sell or something you are looking for?
Email it to SARCcommunicator@outlook.com for inclusion
in this column.*



The Dumbest Thing I've Ever Done

Give yourself a shock? Let the smoke escape from a circuit component? We've all done some dumb things, whether related to the hobby or not. The SARC Exec is willing to donate a prize for the story of the dumbest thing a member has ever done.

You may submit your entry to President John Brodie, who has been sworn to keep the identity of the contributor a secret. The anonymous stories will be reviewed by your Exec and will be published in upcoming Communicators.

So... c'mon and don't be shy. Send your blooper to va7xb@rac.ca

Here are the first two entries, anonymous as we promised.

While living in Victoria and in the final stages of building a new house, we took on the job of painting the interior. All walls were the same colour (off-white, which was the fashion of the day). We started with a 5 gallon can of paint and worked our way through the house until the container was about 75% empty. Knowing that the next day was Sunday and the paint store would be closed, I headed off to get another 5 gallon pail. On arriving home with the new container, I mixed contents of the two together as is the usual practice. The job continued, but with the nagging feeling that something was wrong...the mixed paint was not going on so well. I found out why when it came time to clean the rollers and brushes. Horrors - I had mixed the first batch which proved to be latex paint with the second batch which proved to be oil-based. Would this stuff ever dry? Fortunately, the drywallers had left on-site a propane fired heater which I turned on and directed into the most recently painted rooms. The paint did, in fact, dry and looked fine. However, I would not recommend this to others.

On another occasion years later, I went out to the building supply store to purchase baseboards and mouldings for a renovation project. I came away with a bundle of about 10 pieces, each 16 ft. long, which I tied to the roof rack of my car. Naturally, they stuck out behind the car. I travelled home, pulled into the garage and, without thinking, pushed the button to close the automatic door closer. Crunch, the door came down on the mouldings and broke the whole lot in two. However, I was able to use it all, with judicious placement of cuts and joints.

Crop of Real Hams



Tim Allen (L) as Mike Baxter, KA0XTT, sits in his ham shack with Flynn Morrison, who plays his grandson on the sitcom. [Photo courtesy of John Amodeo, NN6JA]

Fans of the ABC Television show "[Last Man Standing](#)" may be aware that its main character, "Mike Baxter" -- played by Tim Allen -- is supposed to be a radio amateur, KA0XTT. While it may come as no surprise that the sitcom's producer is a ham -- John Amodeo, NN6JA -- several radio amateurs also are on the production crew, and their number just increased, with help from the Greater Los Angeles Amateur Radio Group ([GLAARG](#)) VEC. The show's "Thanksgiving" episode, which aired Friday, November 22, featured a scene with "Baxter" in his basement ham shack.

Amodeo said that for the first time in the series, Baxter briefly talked on the radio. In response, viewers heard a pileup created by using the voices of hundreds of real hams, sent in to the production company.

Enjoy the festive season...



Page 13—News You Can Lose

The Lighter Side of Amateur Radio

New Blighton, N.H. — Trick-or-Treaters in the southside neighborhood of Burlington aren't sure if they received a trick or a treat last night from one local man.

"My son came home with a walkie talkie and I'm like 'what is this?!' I still don't understand what it does," said Becky Juang, a parent in the neighborhood.



Ben Wagonroth, the man responsible, says he can explain. "Halloween totally caught me off guard. I only had ten Glucerna Nutrition Bars in the house and I gave those out in about five minutes."

Wagonroth, a self-proclaimed "tinkerer" and ham radio operator says he felt he had to give something to the kids that rang his doorbell. "I remembered I had a huge box of Beofengs, so I dumped those into a bowl and handed them out, batteries included," said Wagonroth.

"Those things were CHEAP, about the cost of a large candy bar, and I picked up a bulk order online last month. You know, just to have them around," he said.

Parents and kids had peculiar looks on their faces when he placed them in their bags. He said one small child cried and a pair of teenagers threatened to "toilet paper" his trees after receiving the strange items. "One kid, though, really liked the flashlight on the top of the radio," he said.

He says he'll be better prepared with candy next year, and already has plans to build a scarecrow out of a Collins S-Line and a front-yard cemetery that includes crosses made from sections of Rohn 45 covered with black bed sheets.



"Here's a message from Milwaukee"

This thoughtful wife knows that the moment her husband tunes in on Schlitz the reception is good. For Schlitz has a very special taste that beer-lovers are changing to with ultra high frequency. Taste Schlitz, yourself. You'll soon know why—

Schlitz tastes so good to so many people,
it's first in sales in the U.S.A.

RADIO HEADLINER: "The Halls of Ivy", with the Ronald Colmans, Wednesdays, NBC.
TELEVISION HIT: "Schlitz Playhouse of Stars", Fridays, CBS-TV.



© 1952, JDS. SCHLITZ BREWING CO., MILWAUKEE, WIS.

The Beer that made Milwaukee Famous

Wrong-way Elmer

An elderly ham driver was going down the interstate when suddenly his 2 meter rig crackled his call. Answering, he heard a fellow ham's urgent warning, "Hey Elmer, just heard on the news that there's a car going down I-40 the wrong way, please be careful!!" Elmer replied: "Well I'll declare, it's not just one... there's hundreds of them!!!!!!!!!!"



Tech Talk

Street Light RFI

As a Utility Interference Investigator, I run into bad street lights all the time. The most common failures are cycling and constant "invisible" RFI. The cycling failure is fascinating. The photocell senses that darkness has fallen. The light begins the process of coming on. The bulb will begin to illuminate dimly and its brightness will increase slowly over about a minute. At the end of the minute the bulb reaches full brightness and stays lit at full brightness for about 10 seconds. After 10 seconds at full brightness, the bulb goes dark. The light stays dark for about 30 seconds or so and the process repeats.

Listening with a radio tuned to a quiet spot (or 1710) on the broadcast band, you can usually hear the repetitive street light symphony. Sometimes the RFI produced by these failed cycling lights can be heard as high as 325 MHz.

In my region, the cycling street lights can produce the following sounds in a receiver. As the bulb first dimly lights, the RFI begins. In the receiver a broadband buzzing modulation can be heard that seems to have a low pitch. As the street light bulb increases in brightness, the pitch of the modulated RFI increases in lock step with the bulb's brightness. At full brightness the RFI's modulation reaches its highest pitch and greatest loudness. When the bulb goes out 10 seconds later, the RFI stops. In 30 seconds to a minute, the process repeats. The process continues non-stop until daylight comes. I have never actually determined what causes this behavior in street lights. It sounds to me like the photocell's electronic switch has failed and as the current through it increases, RFI is produced. The only other likely source would be the ballast.

When a street light produces constant, unchanging RFI, it can be heard strongest at low frequencies. Only 50% of the time have I been able to detect a street light producing constant RFI at frequencies above 50 MHz. The light DOES NOT need to be illuminated to produce this constant RFI. However, it's usually very easy to pinpoint the offending light. Here again, either the photocell or ballast are bad.

When I report a bad street light, they get fixed without my being present for the repair. I never know if a contractor will make the repairs or one of our troubleshooters. I've spoken to some troubleshooters who have done street light repairs but have never gotten definitive answers as to which failure causes which problem. Sometimes the entire lighthouse is replaced and shipped to an in-house shop for rebuilding. Sometimes the head is rebuilt on the spot. I am never told which repair method will be used or when the work will be done (so I can observe and learn!!)

Like any other RFI source, finding a bad street light requires a portable/mobile receiver with RF Gain control, signal level indicator and directional antenna (or sensible technique based on signal strength). Not all street light RFI manifests itself as visible light. However, it can always be heard. Good DFing tools and technique will get the problem located promptly so repairs can be ordered.

Frank N. Haas KB4T
Utility RFI Investigator
Florida



John White's October presentation was very well received. Here are a couple of photos of the meeting and the link to the presentation notes at URL:

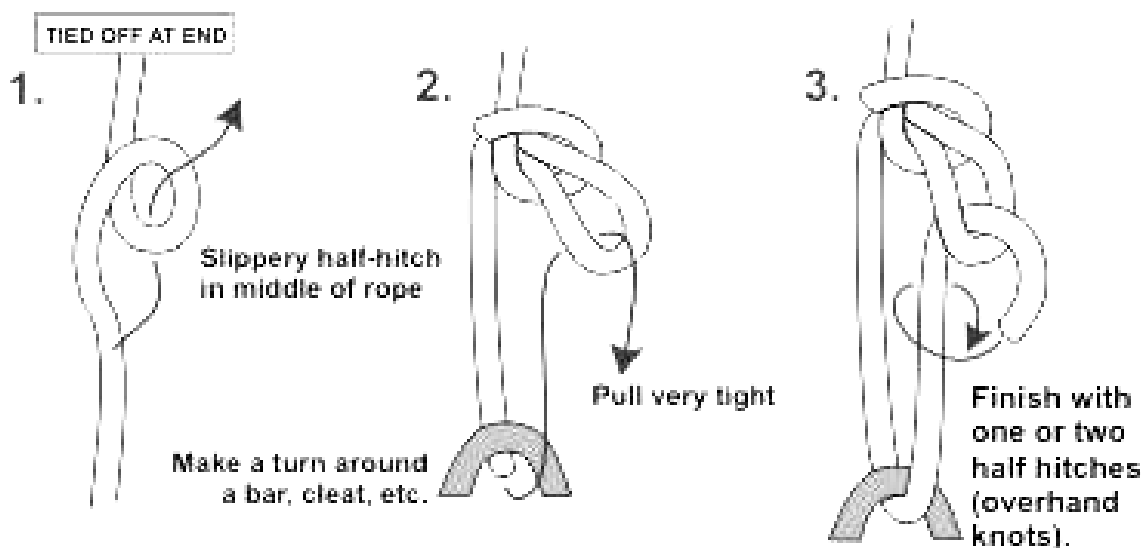
http://www.nsarc.ca/hf/surge_prot_rev2.pdf



Knots are used frequently in our hobby. From securing loads to securing antennas, a knowledge of some basic knots is very valuable. We are considering a General Meeting session later in the season to see some knots and their application demonstrated. In the meantime, we'll feature some common knots for you to practice. This month...

The Trucker's Hitch is one of those knots that once you learn it, you wonder how you ever got along without it!

Use this knot to cinch down a load on your car top, boat, horseback, you name it. This combination of knots allows a line to be pulled tight as a guitar string!



Tie off one end of rope. Lay rope over load to be tied down. Tie a slippery half hitch in the middle of the line to form a small loop. With free end make a turn around a fitting and bring the free end back up to the loop in the line. Feed through and pull line very tight. Secure the knot with the tension in the line with one or two half hitches (overhand knots) tied snug to the loop.

MERRY CHRISTMAS

From The Surrey Amateur Radio Club Directors



RAC News

Radio Amateurs of Canada

RAC Bulletin 2013-039E - RAC Election of Officers

2013-11-22

At its regular monthly meeting, the Board of Directors representing the Radio Amateurs of Canada elected the following officers for a two year term beginning January 1, 2014 and ending December 31, 2015

Geoff Bawden, VE4BAW	President
Glenn MacDonell, VE3XRA	First Vice President
Paul Burggraaf, VO1PRB	Chief Information and Technology Officer
George Gorsline, VE3YV	International Affairs Officer
Doug Mercer, VO1DTM/VO1DM	Chief Field Services Officer
Marcel Mongeon, VA3DDD	Honorary Counsel
Dorothy E. Brown, VA7DBR	Treasurer
Al Masse, VE3CWP	Corporate Secretary

RAC Bulletin 2013-038E - Ken Pulfer, VE3PU and Earle Smith, VE6NM appointed to Hall of Fame

2013-11-21

The Board of Trustees of the Canadian Amateur Radio Hall of Fame is pleased to appoint Ken Pulfer VE3PU (SK) of Ottawa, ON and Earle Smith VE6NM (SK) of Grande Prairie, AB to the Hall of Fame for 2013. The families of the two appointees will be receive this posthumous award in early 2014. A summary of their contributions to amateur radio will be published in "The Canadian Amateur" magazine. Both appointees are Silent Keys.

The appointment is to recognize amateurs for outstanding achievement and for sustained service to amateur radio in Canada, or amateur radio at large. The Board of Trustees consists of an amateur radio representative from each province of Canada, appointed by the Directors of Radio Amateurs of Canada.

SHARP 3.1 (Shaftsbury High Altitude Robotics Project) SUCCESSFUL MISSION

2013-11-07

The Radio Amateurs of Canada would like to congratulate the students, volunteers and teacher Robert Streimer (VE4SHS) at Shaftsbury High School in Winnipeg Manitoba for a successful launch of SHARP 3.1 yesterday.

The SHARP 3.1 helium filled balloon reached an impressive maximum altitude of 35,727 meters (117,214 feet)! This HAB had a payload consisting of four cameras, electronic sensors, Geiger counter, 3 axis accelerometer/magnetometer, 1 internal and 3 external temperature sensors, a luminosity and barometric pressure sensor. Now begins the analyzing of the various data that was collected during the flight.

RAC would like to recognize Bill Unger (VE3XT) for being instrumental in assisting the success of this event through a community grant from RAC in the amount of \$500.

RAC Bulletin 2013-35E - First RAC Member Recognition Award (MRA)

2013-10-31

I am pleased to advise that Jeff Dovyak VE4MBQ has been nominated to receive our first RAC Member Recognition Award. An Amateur since 1994, Jeff has been very active with Winnipeg ARES, and is the Emergency Coordinator for Winnipeg since 1994, where he resides with his wife Rhonda. Look for a full report in an upcoming TCA.



Congratulations Jeff.

RAC Bulletin 2013-034E - RAC Member Recognition Program Extraordinary Service Award

2013-10-31

For the very first time, a group has been nominated to receive the RAC MRP for Extraordinary Service. The VE4WWO CANWARN Net Controller Team has been serving the Prairie and Arctic Storm Prediction Center (PASPC) in Winnipeg

They number 13 strong, and spend long hours doing Net Control duties and storm spotting.

Congratulations folks!



More Ham News

Capture TV Via The ISS?

RSOISS Active on SSTV from International Space Station

Dmitry Pashkov, UB4UAD, reports that the Amateur Radio slow-scan television (SSTV) experiment onboard the International Space Station has been active on 145.800 MHz FM. Stations can view the SSTV pictures from the ISS by making a simple audio connection between the receiver output and the computer soundcard input and using one of the free SSTV programs, such as MMSSTV (for Windows systems) or the SSTV app (for Apple iOS devices).

Details are on the AMSAT-UK website at URL <http://amsat-uk.org/2011/08/01/1490/>

Failing a hard-wired connection, just holding a microphone connected to the PC soundcard in front of the receiver's speaker should provide sufficient audio to decode the SSTV signal. SSTV images from the ISS typically are in Martin 1 format.

The ISS Fan Club website at URL <http://www.issfanclub.com/> indicates when the ISS is within range. The Energia page at URL <http://www.energia.ru/eng/iss/researches/education-26.html> has more information on the SSTV experiment, which is designated MAI-75.

A Repeater Keeper's Night Before Christmas

*It was the night before Christmas all through the land,
Not an amateur was using the 2 metre band.
Some were blaming the jammer but he wasn't there,
When Ofcom had got him he just didn't care!*

*Had all the M3's gone on HF instead?
Or, dusted off the CB that lay under the bed?
Had they gone QRT or "SWARed" up their twigs,
Or, spent all their money on new HF Rigs?*

*When out of the blue a "K" from GB3HS came on the air,
And a bleep from the D-Star; was there somebody there?
A flicker on the 10GHz from the old ATV,
Was there really a picture or just snow to see?*

*All of a sudden whilst drinking my beer,
A thought of what might happen became really clear.
With no users, there'd be no repeaters, no beacons, all canned!
Surely they wouldn't auction off our VHF bands?*

*Whilst we still have repeaters, at least for today,
With electricity bills, insurance and site rental to pay.
We run it, and fix it and clear weeds from the grounds.
So please "Use it or lose it" and spare us ten pounds!*

Andy Russell, G0VRM
East Yorkshire Repeater Group

Canadian Special Prefixes

Canadian radio amateurs will celebrate the 250th anniversary of the Royal Proclamation of 1763, issued by George III, restricting westward expansion of British North America and stabilizing relations with indigenous peoples of the Americas, from November 5th to December 5th by using the following special prefixes:

VG instead of VA,
VX instead of VE,
XJ instead of VO and
XK instead of VY.





QRT...

John Brodie VA7XB

The Long Road...

Last month I related highlights of the long road that we have traversed since June 2012 when our repeater equipment was installed above the 36th floor of the new Concord tower in Central Surrey. Also noted were air quality problems associated with the faulty design of boiler make-up air system located in the same area. The poor air quality resulted from boiler combustion gases partially venting into the room rather than out through the discharge stack. The presence of high temperature, excessive humidity, SO₂ and other trace gases in the combustion products led, in turn, to worrisome corrosion of our equipment and a safety hazard to persons accessing the room and upper floors, as it was determined that dangerous levels of carbon monoxide were also present.



Nelson VE7NAE, John VE7AXU and George VE7QH on the roof at Concord Tower; SARC and BC WARN antennas behind. Lightning rod at centre.

The permanent solution turned out to be simple - the direction of the air intake for the boiler was reversed so that the boiler was not competing for the same air drawn by the HVAC system for building ventilation. Following this change a few weeks ago, it has no longer been necessary to keep the exterior doors or the door vents open to achieve the proper air flow to the boilers and to exhaust the combustion gases. A call to WorkSafe BC made in early October was necessary to force this remedy. You might think that a drastic step such as notifying a regulatory agency would make us unpopular with the building management. On the contrary, we have been thanked profusely for bringing to a head an issue that has been nagging them for over a year without resolution. So we are now in a position to move forward and complete the steps that will ensure full protection for our equipment, with the cooperation of the building management and our sponsors at the City of Surrey.

A working group consisting of George Merchant VE7QH, John MacFarlane VE7AXU, Nelson Eisel VE7NAE and John Brodie VA7XB met at the site in mid October to brainstorm ideas for further improvement. We were fortunate to encounter the HVAC contractor at the same time and had the opportunity to discuss our thoughts and to receive his input. He confirmed our understanding of the situation:

1. the fundamental problem with the boiler ventilation has been fixed;
2. periodic bouts of "bad" air will still occur when the boilers fire and during the moments before the exhaust gas draft is fully established;
3. a gas heater located above the equipment racks is unneeded and will be removed, thereby making available a 4 inch vent in the concrete wall for our use to mount a fan or blower; and
4. construction of an "air-tight" enclosure around the equipment is feasible; and
5. a small fan or blower drawing on outside air will keep the enclosure at positive pressure relative to the boiler room, thus isolating the two environments. We are now awaiting a quote from the contractor to construct the enclosure. Next challenge...to identify a source of funding to pay for the proposed changes.



George VE7QH, John VA7XB and Nelson VE7NAE in front of repeaters in boiler room. An enclosure is proposed for the equipment to isolate it from the rest of the room. The red air expansion tank behind Nelson will be relocated. Equipment in the rack to the left of George belongs to the City of Surrey.